

REMARKS

Currently, claims 1-8 are pending in this application. By way of this Amendment, claims 1 and 4 have been amended, new claim 9 has been added and claims 2, and 6-8 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,903,201 to Wagner (hereinafter “Wagner”).

As discussed in the present application, embodiments of the present invention can limit transactions between buyers and a sellers to only those with whom respective sellers or buyers would want to transact. See, e.g., paragraphs [0070] and [0071] of the present application. By doing so, a buyer or seller can prevent transactions with known “troublesome” or other undesirable entities, while still using a level-2 trading system, for example. Independent claims 1 and 4 have been amended to clarify these features.

Accordingly, amended independent claim 1 now recites, among other things, “receiving one or more buyer pre-approval indications, over the communication network, from one or more of the plurality of selling entities, each buyer pre-approval indication indicating whether a particular selling entity approves or disapproves of a particular buying entity.” Claim 1 further recites “executing at least one transaction between a first buying entity of the plurality of buying entities and a first selling entity of the plurality of selling entities with respect to a particular agricultural commodity, when: (1) the first buying entity makes an electronic indication on a respective posted seller ask for that particular commodity belonging to the first selling entity; and (2) the one or more buyer pre-approval indications do not indicate the first selling entity disapproves of the first buying entity.”

In addition, amended independent claim 4 now recites, among other things, “receiving, over a communication network, one or more seller pre-approval indications from a first buying entity of [a] plurality of buying entities, each of the seller pre-approval indications indicating whether the first buying entity disapproves or approves of a particular buying entity.” Amended independent Claim 4 further recites “executing a transaction between the first buying entity and a first selling entity of a plurality of selling entities with respect to a particular agricultural commodity, when: (1) the first buying entity makes an electronic indication on a posted seller ask for that particular commodity belonging to the first selling entity; and (2) the one or more seller pre-approval indications do not indicate that the first buying entity disapproves of the first selling entity.”

In contrast, Wagner does not disclose or suggest, among other things, use of buyer or seller pre-approvals to limit transactions between buyers and sellers. For at least this reason, Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 4, as amended are allowable over the cited prior art. Similarly, dependant claims 3 and 9, which depend upon independent claim 1, and dependant claim 5, which depends upon independent claim 4, each recite additional unique features and are, therefore, also believed to be allowable.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing Docket No. 616502000100. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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